Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
9/17/75

Mr. Oscar Dystal, President
Bantam Books
666 Fifth Ave.,
New York, N.Y. 10019

Dear Mr. Dystal,

Yesterday, when a reporter phoned me for help in the field in which I have worked for a decade, he told me with some enthusiasm of your enthusiasm for a book on the JFK assassination you are going to print. He also identified the author. He is a man who has written a second-hand article on material that is neither his nor new now that the subject of political assassinations has suddenly become commercially acceptable.

There are, in fact, very few people who have ever done any original work in this field, as contrasted with those who who exploited the subject. In recent years there have been even fewer.

Over the past decade a minor industry has developed. It is stealing and in various ways selling my work. Because I am without means it was not possible for me to do anything about it. The minority who care when criticized express the belief that once I publish something it thereby become public domain. I, of course, believe otherwise.

Right now one of your major competitors, through another publication it owns, is presenting my work as its own and as given to it in an interview never held. It is overt theft, not for the first time by that publication.

Ten years ago another of your competitors actually asked me to file an injunction suit against a book it had not yet published because it used my name and my work without my permission. It was his belief that if I filed a suit it would help sell that book.

It is commonplace today for others to make speeches and write articles in which they even present my lawsuits under the Freedom of Information Act as their own.

My history with Bantam began a decade ago when it rejected my first book while describing it as "highly readable and convincing" and with the hope that I "find the publisher with the enthusiasm and courage necessary." Thereafter it rejected other of the work I offered it. This work has been drawn upon without permission being asked or granted in the article by your author who in another capacity was to have come here months ago to see if his publication would care to buy some of my rights. He didn't.

As a publisher you may not have personal knowledge. To inform you of what seems probable is one of the purposes of this letter. Another is to let you know that while without means I cannot say what I will do, I can indicate what is in my mind. It is that I simply cannot live the years that remain to me with everybody and his brother stealing the work that has been financially ruinous to me and what in some ways dismays me more, misusing it. I will have to see if remedy and relief are possible. With one who did not buy ancillary rights and then simply stole them I have already taken the initial steps.

It seems to me that unless you, too, take the position that all my work is public domain you might want to ask yourself how your author can have acquired the information contained in the work presented to you.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg